



"Classics Illustrated" comic

What is a Classic?

There is no last word on what the Marxist "Classics" are, or might be. There will be no attempt here to lay down a definitive, prescriptive "canon". Instead, what we will be doing is creating a framework around which individuals might wish to build up or to flesh out their own ideas of what "The Classics" consist of.

We will go from Marx and Engels in the mid-1840s to Lenin, Luxemburg and Gramsci, towards the mid-1920s. We will use some material that already appears in our other courses, together with works that have not yet been used in any of these courses, but which are “classics” nonetheless.

The one “classic” we will not include is Karl Marx’s “Capital”. The CU has a separate ten-week course on Capital, Volume 1, and another ten-week course covering Volumes 2 and 3. But we will include part of Marx’s “Wages, Price and Profit”, and part of his “Introduction to a Critique of Political Economy”, both of which are classics in their own right, and which also give more than a taste of the ideas laid out in the great work, “Capital”.

Lenin in his “[The State and Revolution](#)” (a classic, and itself a review of the classics) wrote that in his opinion “[The Poverty of Philosophy](#)”, written and published in 1847, is “the first mature work of Marxism”.

But we will begin in Brussels, Belgium, in early 1845, shortly after Marx and Engels had (in Paris, in August 1844) teamed up. As we know, they stuck together from then on, until death parted them. We will begin with the short piece of work by Karl Marx that is known as the “[Theses on Feuerbach](#)”, named as such by Frederick Engels, and published by Engels in 1888, five years after the death of Karl Marx.

- To download any of the CU courses in PDF files [please click here](#).